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## OLD CITY TAVERNS.

If cosiness is needed as a condition under which authors gain most inspiration, such an abundance of that luxury has been bestowed upon them, in one direction, ever since the time of Shakespeare, that whatever hardships they may have endured in private life, they have had little cause to complain of their public 'entertainment.' So closely, indeed, have the old coffee-houses, inns, and taverns in the City of London become associated with the names of men of letters, so endless are the anecdotes told of these eccentric people, of their sayings and doings, their witticisms and their epigrams, which have reached us from these snug retreats, that no biography of a literary man of any note who has lived any time during the last three hundred years, would be complete without some reference to more than one old City tavern. They were the 'houses of call' for those who had a fund of learning and were eager to exchange ideas. The surroundings were eminently characteristic of men who placed erudition before every other 'circumstance' by which our lives are governed. Here they could 'feast' over each other's words, and serve them up *réchauffé* with a bowl of punch. The floors were sanded, the pipes were of clay, and the seats were wooden high-backed benches. This may not be the modern notion of comfort; but to men so conservative by nature, a warm room and a curtained compartment, where Shakespeare and Ben Jonson had sat in seats of honour, was an ample compensation for the absence of showiness and ease; and the gloom and mystery of the courts and alleys in which these old taverns were invariably found, was perhaps the secret of their attraction to men of a thoughtful and retiring disposition. New faces were seldom seen; it was a sort of club-life, in which the choice of companionship was made in the manner naturally adopted by 'birds of a feather,' flocking in taverns, as in trees.

Dr Johnson had the highest opinion of a tavern; and Boswell has declared that he has heard him assert that a tavern chair was the throne of

human felicity. 'As soon,' said Johnson, 'as I enter the door of a tavern I experience an oblivion of care and a freedom from solitude. When I am seated, I find the master courteous, and the servants obsequious to my call, anxious to know and ready to supply my wants. Wine there exhilarates my spirits, and prompts me to free conversation, and an interchange of discourse with those whom I most love; I dogmatise and am contradicted; and in this conflict of opinions and sentiments I find delight.'

Up a dim court—from the time of James I. until nearly the end of the last century—there stood out of Fleet Street one of the most noted taverns ever built in the City of London. It occupied the spot behind a quiet-looking goldsmith's shop between Temple Bar and the middle Temple Gate. It was called the *Devil* tavern. The church of St Dunstan's was nearly opposite; and the sign of the tavern was St Dunstan pulling the Enemy of Mankind by the nose. In the time of Ben Jonson, who has given a lasting reputation to the house, the landlord's name was Simon Wadloe—the original of 'Old Sir Simon, the King,' the favourite air of Squire Western in *Tom Jones*. The great room was called 'The Apollo.' Here Jonson lorded it with greater authority than Dryden did afterwards at *Will's*, or Addison at *Button's*. The rules of the club, drawn up in the pure and elegant Latin of Jonson, and placed over the chimney, were, it is said, 'engraven in marble.' They are described in the *Tatler* as being 'in gold letters.' This account agrees with the rules themselves, the tablet being still preserved in the banking-house of the Messrs Child, as well as that interesting relic of the tavern—the bust of Apollo. The head, modelled from the Apollo Belvidere, kept guard over the door of the 'club.' This is the tavern mentioned by Pope:

And each true Briton is to Ben so civil,  
He swears the Muses meet him at the *Devil*.

And Swift in one of his letters to Stella says:  
'I dined to-day with Dr Garth and Mr Addison'

at the *Devil* tavern near Temple Bar, and Garth treated.'

It is more with the *Mitre* than with the *Devil* tavern that Dr Johnson's name is associated. It was there that Johnson said to Ogilvie, in reply to his observation, that Scotland had a great many noble prospects: 'I believe, sir, you have a great many; Norway, too, has noble wild prospects; and Lapland is remarkable for prodigious noble wild prospects; but, sir, let me tell you, the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever sees is the high-road which leads him to England.' It was at this tavern that the idea of the tour to the Hebrides was first started; and there, at their 'old rendezvous,' Goldsmith often supped with Johnson and Boswell. The original *Mitre* was of Shakespeare's time. It was pulled down in the year 1829 by the Messrs Hoare, in order to extend their banking-house; and in the same way Messrs Child have recently increased their 'accommodation' by building upon the spot where once stood the *Devil* tavern. Both these taverns are thus blotted out. This is truly a commercial age! The old City churches are falling fast, and counting-houses are rising up where their old chimes (now silenced for ever!) were once heard; and even the old City churchyards are slowly disappearing from sight. What, then, will the old City be five hundred years hence? Hard by is the *Rainbow* tavern, now a first-class dining-house, which was indicted in former times for the *nuisance* of selling coffee.

There is another old City tavern where Dr Johnson and Goldsmith often sat down together over a snug dinner, a tavern in Wine Office Court, called the *Old Cheshire Cheese*. Passing along Fleet Street and glancing up this court, those magic words seem to take up all the space in the distance, as completely as though they were being glanced at through a telescope; and if you follow the instincts of your nature, you will dive down the telescope towards the attractive lamp above the door and enter the tavern. The customary pint of stout, in an old pewter, will be placed before you if your taste lies that way; and when you have finished your chop or steak, or pudding, as the case may be, there will follow that 'speciality' for which the *Cheshire Cheese* is principally noted—a dish of bubbling and blistering cheese, which comes up scorching in an apparatus, resembling a tin of Everton toffee in size and shape.

It was the same when frequented by Johnson and Goldsmith; and their favourite seats in the north-east corner of the window are still pointed out. Nothing is changed—except the waiters in course of nature—in this conservative and cosy tavern. If Goldsmith did not actually write parts of the *Vicar of Wakefield* in that corner, he must have thought out more chapters than one while seated there. He lived in Wine Office Court, and here it is supposed the novel, begun at Canonbury Tower, was finished. 'I received

one morning,' said Dr Johnson, according to Boswell—'a message from poor Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and, as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed; and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merits, told the landlady I should soon return; and having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill.'

Not less interesting than the *Cheshire Cheese* is that favourite resort of literary men for nearly three hundred years—the old *Cock Tavern*, or, as it was first called, the *Cock Alehouse*, which faces the Middle Temple Gate, and has been famous for its chops and steaks, its porter, and above all, its stout, ever since it was established. Whilst the Plague was raging in London in 1665, the master shut up his house and retired into the country. The following advertisement is still extant: 'This is to notify that the master of the *Cock and Bottle*, commonly called the *Cock Alehouse*, at Temple Bar, hath dismissed his servants and shut up his house for this Long Vacation, intending (God willing) to return at Michaelmas next, so that all persons whatsoever who have any accompts with the said master, or farthings belonging to the said house, are desired to repair thither before the 8th of this instant July, and they shall receive satisfaction.' In our time, this tavern has been immortalised by Mr Tennyson in his poem beginning,

O plump head-waiter at the Cock.

But 'Will Waterproof,' to whom the verses are addressed, has ceased 'to pace the gritted floor' for some years now; and if there are any other changes in the old room, they are very slight. The walls are now only partially lined with wainscoting; and the silver tankards of special customers are no longer hung up in glittering rows in the bar. The old carved chimney-piece—of the age of James I.—however, still remains; and the curtained boxes retain the same cosy appearance, and still that

Halo lives about  
The waiter's hands, that reach  
To each his perfect pint of stout,  
His proper chop to each.

At the present hour, the old tavern, viewed from the opposite side of the road in Fleet Street, looks as if it occupied an underground position; as if it were buried somewhere behind those

hoardings in the midst of ruins. The original entrance—a long sanded passage, more like a tunnel than ever now—still stands; but it will soon be pulled down; though the tavern, it is said, being sufficiently far back from the road not to interfere with the widening of Fleet Street, is destined to remain a famous landmark in the vast field of literature.

May this rumour prove correct! For most of the taverns which stood in the neighbourhood of Fleet Street, Newgate Street, Barbican, and Cheapside, have become a mere matter of history, without in some instances even a votive stone to denote their original site. The famous gilded Cock which stood for so many years over the entrance, disappeared not very long since; stolen, it is supposed, by some ardent lover of old London curios.

Although the *Cock* was well known in the latter half of the seventeenth century, there is very little allusion to it in contemporary literature. This may be because it was considered an ale-house and not a coffee-house. However, Pepys records going there in 1668, and eating lobster until midnight. Fielding was fond of the old tavern, as were Smollett, Savage, Goldsmith, Boswell, and Cowper. The standard dishes at the *Cock* are still 'chop and chop to follow,' or a steak, either 'small,' 'dinner,' or 'point,' followed by a kidney 'sniped'—that is to say, broiled whole so as to keep in the gravy—and toasted cheese. The old cellar of famous port wine was sold by auction towards the end of last year, but punch is still served in pint tumblers according to ancient usage. An old *Cock* token of 1668 is still shown, and may be one of the 'farthings' alluded to in the advertisement above quoted.

The *Chapter House Tavern*, at the corner of Chapter House Court, Paternoster Row, frequented principally towards the end of the last century by booksellers, authors, and editors, has not yet been removed. There it still stands, a long dark building, some three stories high. It can be reached by a narrow entrance into the court from St Paul's Churchyard, or under a low archway from Paternoster Row. The coffee-room, on the ground-floor, where the literary 'judges' sat, has been recently changed into a bar. But the windows and the walls are the same; and the gloom which surrounds it now is little less than it was a hundred years ago. The ceilings in the tavern have such an unimposing elevation, that even though, when entering, one is made conscious of a precipitate descent to a level of more than a foot below the court outside, one is not surprised into a confession that the room has gained in loftiness in any marked degree. In fact, this circumstance is dispiriting; and the gloom which hangs about the exterior adds to this peculiar sense of depression. From every point the shadows seem to have gathered about this tavern, and above them all there looms the shadow of St Paul's.

In the first number of the *Connoisseur*, in 1754, this place is referred to. 'And here my publishers would not forgive me,' says the writer, 'was I to leave the neighbourhood without taking notice of the *Chapter Coffee-house*, which is frequented by those encouragers of literature and—as they are styled by an eminent critic—"not the worst judges of merit," the booksellers.' It was another

favourite tavern of Goldsmith's; and the place where he sat was, until the alterations took place, pointed out to visitors. It was to this tavern also that Chatterton frequently went. 'I am quite familiar at the *Chapter Coffee-house*', he wrote to his mother, 'and know all the geniuses there.'

On the side nearest to Paternoster Row, about the centre of Newgate Street, there is still standing the *Salutation* tavern, formerly known as the *Salutation and Cat*. This old tavern, like the *Cock*, is reached by passing down a tunnel and through a bar and across a passage, when the coffee-room begins to come in sight. This room is divided into two apartments by pillars, and the one most distant from the door is on a lower foundation by some feet. The efforts which are made to preserve the manners and customs of this tavern are severe; but when the traditional snuff-box is presented to you, after you have paid your bill, the privilege of sneezing at the head-waiter seems as if it had lost half its charm. It is difficult to realise now how Coleridge could have found the tavern a pleasant retreat when suffering from fits of melancholy; and yet it was here that Southeby found him, and tried to rouse him from his semi-insane idleness.

Cheapside and the Poultry were at one time as famous as Fleet Street for their 'literary' taverns. The *White Horse* in Friday Street makes a conspicuous figure in the *Merry Conceited Jests of George Peele*, one of the poets and play-writers of Elizabeth's reign; and the name is still attached to a gin-palace of the modern type; and there was another tavern which is even more celebrated—at the corner of Friday Street and Bread Street—called the *Mermaid* club, where Sir Walter Raleigh, who instituted it, and where Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Jonson, and many others, met.

Souls of poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the *Mermaid* tavern!

So sang Keats. Nor must the *Queen's Arms*, another tavern in Cheapside where this poet once lived, be forgotten—where he wrote his sonnet on Chapman's *Homer*, and all the poems in his first volume. This tavern, like most of the rest of the old taverns in Cheapside, has disappeared; and the second floor, which Keats occupied—stretching over a passage leading to the entrance—is now a warehouse, with nothing more ornamental about its frontage than a rusty crane.

In Great Eastcheap, between Small Alley and St Michael's Lane, stood the *Boar's Head* tavern, commemorated by Shakespeare. It was destroyed by the Great Fire; but it was rebuilt almost immediately afterwards; nor was it finally demolished—in order to make space for new approaches to London Bridge—until 1831. The back part of the house looked upon the burying-ground of St Michael's, Crooked Lane. The statue of William IV. nearly marks the site. In the reign of Richard II., a tenement, called the *Boar's Head*, in Eastcheap, was in possession of Walter Morden, stockfish-monger of London. In the time of Henry IV. there was, according to Stow, no tavern in Eastcheap. Shakespeare alone

refers to this tavern. After the Great Fire, it was rebuilt of brick, with its door in the centre, a window above; and then a boar's head cut in stone, with the initials of the landlord (I. T.), and the date (near the snout) of 1668, which may still be seen in the Guildhall Museum. Boswell says: 'I mentioned a club in London at the *Boar's Head* in Eastcheap, the very tavern where Falstaff and his joyous companions met; and the members of which all assume Shakespeare's characters. One is Falstaff; another, Prince Henry; another, Bardolph; and so on.' To which Johnson replied: 'Don't be of it, sir. Now that you have a name, you must be careful to avoid many things not bad in themselves, but which will lessen your character. This, every man who has a name must observe. A person who is not publicly known, may live in London as he pleases, without any notice being taken of him; but it is wonderful how any person of consequence is watched.' In his essay, 'A Reverie at the *Boar's Head* Tavern,' Goldsmith says: 'Here, by a pleasant fire, in the very room where old Sir John Falstaff cracked his jokes, in the very chair which was sometimes honoured by Prince Henry, I sat and ruminated on the follies of youth; wished to be young again, but was resolved to make the best of life while it lasted; and now and then compared past and present times together.' Forgetful of the ravages committed by the Great Fire—just as Boswell did—Goldsmith fancied that he sat in the very tavern frequented by Falstaff.

When the old City taverns with a literary 'flavour' stopped short in their eastward course, it would be difficult to decide. It was out of Thames Street, in Three Cranes Lane—'so called,' says Stow, 'not only of three cranes at the tavern door, but rather of three cranes of timber placed on the vintry wharf by the Thames' side, to crane up wines—that the *Three Cranes* stood, famous as early as the reign of James I., and frequented by Ben Jonson and the wits of his time. In *Bartholomew Fair*, Jonson says: 'These pretenders to wit! Your *Three Cranes*, *Mitre*, and *Mermaid* men! Not a corn of true salt, not a grain of right mustard among them all.' The mention of this tavern by mine host of the *Bonny Black Bear*, in *Kenilworth*, is frequent. 'Nor is there such a wine,' says Giles Gosling—drinking off a cup of his own sack—at the *Three Cranes* in the vintry, to my knowledge.'

There is no sign of this tavern in Thames Street now. The large modern warehouse—still called the *Three Cranes*—standing upon the site formerly occupied by the old warehouse and tavern, with its lofty frontage towards the Thames, seems to foretell in its very face of how these venerable landmarks in the City of London must of necessity soon be swept away. They are crowded out in this neighbourhood, as elsewhere, in dark alleys, up steep lanes and narrow courts, where still a few of them hold out an almost ludicrous resistance against the march of time. Some of them are propped up by wooden beams, resembling crutches, against which they lean like those incurable cripples who have the appearance of being on their last legs; while others are supported on each side by houses which are only in a slight degree less weak and tottering. These old City

taverns are monuments of their own antiquity and fame; and when the last snug retreat has grown dark,

We know not where is that Promethean heat  
That can its light relume.

### ONE FALSE, BOTH FAIR; OR, A HARD KNOT.

BY JOHN B. HARWOOD.

#### CHAPTER XXII.—FROM POUNCE AND PONTIFEX.

'My dear, I shall not stay long away. I dislike leaving you here alone; and besides, these new-fashioned garden-parties are not much to my taste, and one meets the oddest people, perhaps because it is out of doors. But Celina made a point of my coming to her, and so—'

Now, Celina was Her Grace the Duchess of Snowdon; and Lady Barbara had always highly approved of that handsome and frigid young lady while yet in meditation fancy free, and always took rather undeserved credit to herself for having been instrumental in placing the ducal coronet on her well-shaped head. 'Poor dear Snowdon ought to thank me for having helped him to such a wife,' was a not unfrequent remark of Lady Barbara. There were other matchmakers, less disinterested, who possibly owed a grudge to Lady Barbara for what she had done towards hooking for her young friend the biggest matrimonial prize of the season; but at anyrate the Duke, who was plump and short, and sometimes mistaken, by strangers who came to see his model farm and pedigree cattle, for his own bailiff, so naturally did gaiters and velveteen suit him, had secured a bride fit to do honour to his high degree and ample means.

'I shall not be dull in the least; I don't mind it at all, dear Lady Barbara,' the young mistress of Leominster House had replied gently; and then she had been left to her solitude in that vast mausoleum of a mansion that was now her home. Of course Lady Leominster had been invited. She was always invited. Cards and notes, so to speak, rained at her door; but it was impossible that she should, at this comparatively early stage of her widowhood, mix in general society. She stayed, then, at home; while Lady Barbara sallied forth to Willow Reach, as the Duke's pretty Thames-side villa bore name, where very august personages were expected to gild the assembly by their presence.

'I shall not be dull; see, I have the Laureate's new poem, only just begun,' the young lady had said, as she took the book in her hand, just before the aunt of the late Marquis set forth on her festal errand. But hours had elapsed, and Lady Barbara had been absent for a long long time, and the summer sun was drooping in the sky, and very, very few lines of the poetry had been perused by the fair young creature in black, whose mourning garb and utter loneliness seemed almost touching, when contrasted with the pomp and state and grandeur that environed her. She took the book again and again in her white hand and glanced at its pages; but her mind strayed far away—so it seemed—from the lines before her, and she laid down the volume with a sigh and remained lost in thought.

'A person from Pounce and Pontifex, My Lady, with business papers of importance. Would your Ladyship please to see him?'

The lady lifted her book again, and it was almost peevishly that she made answer: 'Certainly not. I am occupied. I do not wish to be disturbed.'

The man in sable retired with oriental obedience; but before he had traversed the wide expanse of Brussels carpet that intervened between him and the door, the lady seemed to change her mind. 'Stop, Peters,' she said languidly. 'I will see this person, since my lawyers have sent him.'

The clerk of Messrs Pounce and Pontifex was ushered in. In some respects the man did look the very type of clerkhood. He wore the neatest garments, tight-fitting, neither new nor old, of 'black' or 'subfusc' hue, as our old Oxford Latin statutes used to phrase it; and his shirt-collar was very white, and his pale cravat tight and trim. He carried under one arm some bundles of papers and parchments, tightly tied with red tape, and in one hand, barrister-like, he bore a blue bag.

The young lady looked up with but a dulled curiosity as the man made his bow. She had expected to see a quiet, unobtrusive person of the male sex, anxious to do his errand and to take his leave. To her surprise, the languid glance of her soft blue eyes was met by the steady stare of wicked eyes, as bright, ay, brighter than her own, eyes full of fire and full of malice, half-threatening, half-mocking. Never, surely, did family solicitors of such high standing as the immemorial firm of Pounce and Pontifex send, to such a client, such a clerk. He had not impressed the servants unfavourably. But then his bearing had been firm and staid, and his looks downcast. Now, there was a change in the man's manner, and he had somewhat of the air of a reckless buccaneer of earlier days, treading his schooner's deck, in silken scarf, and with gold and silver and pistols ostentatiously displayed about his person. So startled was the lady, that, in sincere alarm, she rose from her seat and moved towards the bell. The singular emissary of Pounce and Pontifex barred her way.

'No, no, My Lady Marchioness,' he said, in that strange voice that belonged to Chinese Jack, and which provoked or perplexed those who heard it; 'you must not ring the bell—at least, not now. Sit down again, I beg, and let us attend to business. Come; we have no time to lose. Lady Barbara may come back. I lost hours, in getting myself fit to act the character, when once I saw that the coast was clear.'

Scared and amazed, the young mistress of Leominster House shrank back from the audacious eyes and dauntless front of this extraordinary intruder. She hesitated a moment, and then meekly resumed her seat. What, indeed, was she to do? She could not reach the bell. To call aloud was useless, in that vast catacomb of a house, where all ordinary sounds were deadened by space. Besides, was there anything to justify a shriek for aid? The man was not rude, only odd and peremptory. Pounce and Pontifex had certainly made choice of an eccentric envoy; but there he was. One thing

puzzled her. Where had she seen those bold eyes before? She had no recollection of the man, with his close-cut hair and bushy beard and face seamed by countless lines, save of those daring defiant eyes, with their look of rough admiration and keen scrutiny, odious both.

'And now to business,' said this phenomenal clerk.

'Will you not?'—said she whom he addressed, as she timidly motioned towards a chair.

The man took the seat readily enough. 'Your husband's father, My Lady, has done me the honour to ask me to be seated at Castel Vawr often enough,' he said drily.

'You know Castel Vawr, then?' faltered out the bewildered girl.

'Better than your Ladyship does. I know most things; and what I don't know, I have a knack of finding out,' was the man's cool answer. 'So now, as I said, to business. We may as well hoist true colours at the masthead—excuse a sailor's simile—at once. I don't come from Pounce and Pontifex in the least—not I. Never was a quill-driver. This rubbish, these stage properties,' he added—glancing at the red-taped packets and the blue bag that lay beside him on the floor, contemptuously—'I bought at a law-stationer's in Cursitor Street. The make-up wasn't bad, though,' he added boastfully.

'Not from Pounce and Pontifex! Then, sir, I must insist'—said the lady, as she half-rose; but somehow she was cowed by the burning eyes that met hers.

'Insist that I should go—ring, and have the intruder turned out!' said the man laughingly. 'No, Lady Leominster; that won't do with one who has looked Death, in his ugliest shape, in the face for thirty years, and who is used to frowns from more potent persons than even a Marchioness. No; nor am I a thief,' he added rapidly, as he noted the expression of her face. 'Not a bit of that. I am no robber; I am no clerk; I am simply an unaccredited plenipotentiary, and come on my own account, not on that of those venerable compilers of bills of costs, Pounce and Pontifex.'

Next to his sneering tone, the most remarkable feature in the conversation of Chinese Jack certainly was, that at one time the man seemed to be a perfect gentleman, and a moment later, the dissolute, reckless adventurer. She could but eye him with timid wonder as he went on.

'I know I waste time, and how precious the minutes may be,' he said, with an evident enjoyment of the situation and of the fact that he was master of it. 'Yet I do waste them. You and I, My Lady, must be friends or foes. I know too much to be neglected.'

'I—I do not understand—you come from Castel Vawr,' stammered the lady.

'From an older land than even the Welsh Marches—from Alexandria—from Egypt. I saw a good deal, and heard a good deal, and picked up a few trifling secrets too, when you and I came home together by the good ship *Cyprus*, My Lady.'

'Secrets—the *Cyprus*—in what way, pray, can secrets concern me?' demanded she haughtily, and with no perceptible tremor in her voice.

Chinese Jack eyed her with a composure not

wholly devoid of a hidden sense of amusement, as though she had been a child indeed. But he was quite grave when he said : 'Not directly, of course, My Lady Marchioness. But—you have a sister.'

'I have indeed. Can you—is it possible that you have been sent to me—by her?' The voice in which the question was asked was not a steady one.

Chinese Jack indulged in a little laugh. 'Not I, My Lady,' he said, as slowly as if he were weighing every word. 'Although, you see, I might have been. You see, My Lady, the likeness is so very remarkable between you two young things—begging pardon for the freedom—that it would not take much to turn the tables, to put the other one in your place, and leave your Ladyship out in the cold. A pity, too! This is a grand house, and the castle, to my fancy, is a finer; and then the splendid income, and the rank, and the power, and the station, and the being flattered and courted by high and low. It would never do to lose it all, My Lady. It would be heart-breaking to be outgeneraled, because the competitor held better cards, or played them better. And yet that will happen, be sure of that, if you allow me to go over to Miss Cora's side, and—'

'Hold, sir! I forbid you to address me thus! I forbid you to drag my dear, unhappy, misled sister's name into your talk. Leave me, this instant—or—' She stopped, trembling. She had risen to her feet, eager in her passionate indignation. The adventurer merely laughed. It was not a joyous laugh; the quiet, scornful chuckle of a fiend, rather. That laugh, and the expression of the man's mocking eyes, checked her anger, and, with a sob, she sank helplessly back in her chair.

'Lady Leominster,' said the man, in a changed tone, 'I only wish to convince you, for your own good, that I—Jack Nameless, you may call me—can be a most useful friend, or a very dangerous enemy. I am not a moral man, of course. I am not a model character. Liken me, if you please, to those mercenaries of two or three hundred years back, the Condottieri—the Dugald Dalgetties—who were ever ready to sell their swords to the highest bidder. Your purse is the longest, and I have come to you the first. But, on the other hand, the Opposition would be more liberal as to pledges, which in the event of success would doubtless be redeemed. If you despise me, say the word, and I will go over to the hostile camp. I have power to help and power to harm, I can assure you.'

'What do you want—money?' asked the lady warily.

'Of course I do, My Lady. To the best of my poor experience, there is nobody who does not want it. But I am not extortionate—a mere retaining fee. Five hundred pounds would—'

'Five hundred pounds!' She could not help repeating the words with something like dismay.

'Say three, then—or, better, three-fifty; I have a use for the odd money,' said Chinese Jack promptly. 'We will settle, then, on our three hundred and fifty pounds. There is a good, solid, heavy balance at your Ladyship's bankers, and if there had not been, your Ladyship's name

would have sufficed to bring down upon us a shower-bath of gold. Miss Cora would be better here,' he added, 'as sister of the Marchioness, than as queen of all.'

'If you could—' But what influence could you exert—unless she has really sent you here,' faltered out the lady. She had risen, and with a tiny key unlocked the prettiest little curiosity of a costly cabinet, from which she withdrew a cheque-book with trembling hand.

'You may guess my influence over her by my influence over you, Lady Leominster,' was the cool answer of Chinese Jack, whose over-bright eyes, like those of some weird creature of romance, seemed to penetrate her very thoughts; 'and you may believe, what is the truth—that it rests with me whether you hold your own, with a penitent sister at your side, or whether—Never mind, My Lady. Tear out the leaf of your cheque-book. Dip your pen in that toy inkstand. But, on reconsideration, let the cheque be for five hundred, if you please. I had forgotten that it is not my silence, but my active aid which your interests require; and help costs money.'

Very timidly, like a frightened child in presence of a stern teacher, she obeyed, and with trembling fingers, held out the cheque for the man to take. To her surprise, the man delayed to take it.

'I am no robber, my young Lady Marchioness, as I mentioned previously,' he said, proudly enough; 'nor do I exact blackmail from you with a pistol at your head. What I want is—payment for my services, for my knack of setting things, that are wrong, right. Jack Nameless never was a thief. I look on it as my retaining fee. I am an advocate worth a thumping one. But I do not force my advocacy upon you. I could bring your sister back. I could insure your position; not, of course, on such terms as these; but, if you please, My Lady, I will decline your cheque.'

'Take it—but bring my darling back to me,' she said, and fell sobbing back into her chair and hid her face.

Chinese Jack picked up the cheque, which had been allowed to drop to the floor, carefully satisfied himself that no formality had been omitted, and folding up the valuable slip of paper, thrust it into his pocket. 'Now, Lady Leominster,' he said hastily, but in a distinct tone, 'I have taken your pay and engaged in your service. Nothing for nothing is a favourite saying of mine; and a two-edged one it is, for I should feel your money burn in my pocket, if I did not work it out, as I will. Trust me, I won't leave my visiting-card, nor write down my name in your porter's hall-book; and I should scarcely find admission here a second time as a clerk of your solicitors. But rely on it, you will see more before long of your very humble servant Jack Nameless. I have more tricks than one in my bag, as our French friends say.' He picked up the bag and the red-taped papers from the floor, and was gone so speedily and silently, that it was as if a shadow had flitted through the vast length of the stately room. Chinese Jack needed no guide to conduct him through the spacious halls and branching passages of the huge mansion. Either he had known the place

of old, or his instinct for locality was quick and unerring, for he had nearly gained the outer entrance, when there was a deep roll of wheels, and then a bustle and stir ; and Lady Barbara, fresh from her garden-party at the ducal villa, came in. With perfect respect, the man stepped back and stood aside to let the dignified spinster pass him by, bowing slightly as he did so. He played his assumed character very well, his law-papers under his arm, his bag tightly held in a black-gloved hand, a certain stiff humility in his salute. But a very close observer might have noticed that he seemed a down-looking man, and avoided, perhaps from shyness, meeting Lady Barbara's eye. She looked at him inquisitively as she acknowledged the movement of his head, and then passed on. Thirty seconds more and Chinese Jack was in the courtyard, through the side-gate, and gone.

'My dear, I have been thinking of you, and fearing you felt dull all through this tiresome party. Certainly, Society is not what it was. One misses the people one ought to meet, and gets jostled by those who— But who was that singular-looking man with the beard and the papers that I met as I came in ?' asked Lady Barbara presently. 'Did you receive him ?'

'I did. He gained admission, I am sorry to say, on false pretences, as a clerk of Pounce and Pontifex, with papers to be signed, and—'

'The wretch ! What was he, then—a thief ?' exclaimed Lady Barbara, aghast, and looking around her, as if to be sure that the Claudes and Hobbimases and Rembrandts on the walls were yet in their gilded frames.

'No—not that, dear Lady Barbara,' sobbed out the girl ; 'though he did distress and frighten me, talking as he did in hints about my darling Cora, my poor misguided sister, that I love so dearly, and would give so much, all I have, to win back to me. And I dread scandal so, and fear that disgrace should rest on the proud name of the great family—yours, Lady Barbara, and mine now, into which my husband brought me. So I was alarmed, and—and gave him money.'

'The knave, the wretch ! Some begging-letter-writer, on the watch to extort a trifle of money from a young creature like— The servants are to blame for admitting him,' said Lady Barbara wrathfully.

'It was my fault ; I consented to receive him,' returned the other timidly ; 'and he was very fair-spoken, and seemed really to have come on business, until he began to talk of Cora, and then— You are not angry with me, aunt, because I gave the man money ?' She spoke in a sweet childish voice, that would have softened a harder heart than that of austere Lady Barbara, who came over at once and kissed her tenderly on the forehead.

'No wonder you are frightened, my love ! I ought to have been here to protect you,' she said ; 'but I thought in your own house you were safe. The audacity of the man ! Did he leave any clue, name, or address by which he could be traced ? If so, I will put the matter at once into the hands of the police, and he will be punished as he deserves,' said the stern old lady, who never dreamed that the intruder's raid into Leominster House could have profited him by more than a couple, or say three or four sovereigns, and who

would have been horrified had she known the actual amount of the cheque.

'He left no name, no address ; and had he mentioned such, I should have forgotten them, I think. It was only my sister's dear name that stirred my heart so,' was all the reply.

#### LA GRANDE CHARTREUSE.

Not long since, the rumour spread far and wide that the action of the French government towards the so-called religious societies had caused the monks of La Grande Chartreuse to contemplate the necessity of seeking a new home in Switzerland. As these holy men are no mere idle drones, but busily occupy themselves in manufacturing, amongst other concoctions, certain *liqueurs* which have so won the public taste as to bring the brotherhood both fame and wealth, the French would no doubt regret losing them as much as the Swiss would rejoice at gaining them. As there is some probability—that it seems more remote than it once was—that the celebrated monastery, in which so industrious a fraternity dwell and labour, may soon be numbered with the things of the past, a sketch of its history and of its condition, as seen a year or two ago, may not be uninteresting.

About eight centuries since, a citizen of Rheims named Bruno was seized with an ardent longing for a monastic life, and he sought among his fellow-citizens for some whose minds had the same bent as his own. He soon found six who were glad to be his companions in mortifying the flesh, and indulging their intense sense of weariness with the things of the world. Not one of the seven, however, was acquainted with any place sufficiently near, and yet remote from the haunts of men, for their purpose. Nor did the brotherhood know how to overcome this difficulty until they heard that there dwelt in Grenoble a pious soul named Hugues, who was sure to be not only able but willing to direct them to such a spot as they needed. So they, clad in horse-hair shirts and coarse woollen robes, set forth on sandalled feet, with staves in their hands, to seek out and consult this worthy man. In so doing they did not err ; for Hugues, leading them towards the Alps, brought them, after a journey of twenty miles, to a valley standing four thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea, and almost encircled with snow-clad mountains. Here they determined to settle. Soon, by their energetic labours, with the aid of the sturdy mountaineers sent them by Hugues, a chapel and seven cells were built.

In a comparatively short time, the Carthusians—as they called themselves—so grew in popular estimation that this their first monastery became a favourite resort for those who felt called to an ascetic life. In the days of its pristine vigour, there was little to attract within its walls any save those who were anxious to mortify the flesh and give themselves up to devotions of the austere sort. A meagre and distasteful diet, coarseness and scantiness in dress, with the continual repetition of prayers, were rigidly

enforced. It was the bounden duty also of every monk to subject his body to pain by the application of the scourge. The use of animal food was strictly forbidden. Fish was indeed allowed now and then, but very seldom. The only bread that might be eaten, whether in health or sickness, was made of wheat ground with the husks. The present inhabitants of La Grande Chartreuse take a pride in telling visitors of the austere lives their predecessors led. They, however, as far as we can judge, do not seem very anxious to emulate their forefathers in this respect.

We may here mention that Bruno himself was not allowed to preside for long over the monastery he had founded. He was soon summoned to Rome by the pope. Here, because of the great fame he had obtained, he was kept for some time, much against his own wish. At last he was permitted to leave and carry out a resolution he had formed of founding a monastery at La Torra, in the wilds of Calabria, like to that which he had established in Dauphiné. There he died in the year 1101.

During the eight centuries that have passed since St Bruno founded La Grande Chartreuse, the Carthusians have become so numerous that, in spite of the havoc wrought by the Reformation and other causes, the order has many monasteries in Europe. Some of these are not a little famous, as, for instance, the Cortosa near Pavia, the architectural magnificence of which has made it one of the sights of Europe. Still the one which was the first home of the order remains to the present day the most important of them all, and that in spite of the fact, that it has suffered much from fire and persecution, and has been subjected to various trials, from which kindred institutions have been comparatively free. This long-continued prosperity, notwithstanding so many adverse circumstances, is beyond question largely due to the very mundane fact that its position places at its command an ample supply of the Alpine plants needed to produce the delectable liqueurs for which it has so long been famous.

The present monastic buildings have not been in existence more than two hundred years. Indeed, between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries the monks of La Grande Chartreuse had the misfortune to lose their home by fire no fewer than six times. It was so destroyed in the year 1676, and was then restored at great expense in its existing form. The site occupied is a little lower down than that on which St Bruno and his companions built their chapel and cells. Those primitive buildings, which were simply wattled cabins, stood, tradition says, on an isolated mass of rock, which is now inclosed in a pine forest that overhangs the present buildings. In this forest are two chapels sacred to Ste Marie and Notre-Dame de Casabous. There is also another chapel to be seen erected on the rock where St Bruno is said to have first built the one in which he and his little band of disciples worshipped. It is dedicated to its first founder, and contains, so they say, the original altar at which that good man was wont to celebrate mass. A fine cascade descending from this rock in the direction of the monastery adds greatly to the beauty of the scene.

Much cannot be said in praise of the architecture of La Grande Chartreuse, as far as its outward appearance, when looked at closely, is concerned. Still, it cannot be denied that the vast stone structure, plain as it is, has an air of solid grandeur which produces a solemnising effect. Moreover, the straggling pile of buildings, with its long stretches of walls, square towers, steep gray-slated roofs, with their lines broken by dormer windows and slender spires, which jut up here and there, harmonises admirably with its surroundings—namely, a green upland, sheltered by pine forests, from the midst of which mighty rocks rear their hoary heads.

On entering the main building, we find ourselves in a corridor, flanked on each side by reception-rooms, named respectively the Salles de France, d'Italie, d'Allemagne, and de Bourgogne. This corridor, on the walls of which are pictures of various Carthusian monasteries, leads to the room set apart for the general-superior of the order. On its right are the cells of the dignitaries of the fraternity; on its left are the kitchen, the chapel, and the church. From it, a stone staircase leads to the first floor. Here are the chapter-house and the apartments reserved for strangers. From this floor, another flight of stairs conducts to some garrets, used as workshops and storerooms. The cloisters consist of two galleries, each three hundred yards long. Eighty cells open into them. Every cell is furnished with a cupboard-like bedstead, a reading-desk, table, large chair, stove, crucifix, statuette of the Virgin, a few books of devotion, and directions for novices. The bedding consists of a straw mattress, two linen sheets, and a warm thick counterpane.

The church, like all the rest of the building, is strikingly devoid of decorations, although the walls are covered, we can hardly say adorned, with some curious old carvings. A transparent screen separates the nave into two parts; one of these is reserved for the choir and the superiors of the order; the other is for the use of the ordinary monks. Visitors who attend any of the services have to take their places in a small gallery. The chapter-house is a large square room, surrounded by stalls built out from the walls, on which are to be seen very badly executed portraits of the generals of the order.

The library is a large well-fitted room. On the shelves there are, however, we were told, only five thousand volumes. Many of these are very handsomely bound, but very few of them are of any great intrinsic value. Fire, time, and the destroying energy of over-zealous agents of the Reformation, have made sad havoc with the treasures it once possessed.

To the monastery proper is attached a small but well-cultivated garden; this and the buildings we have described are encircled by a high wall, on the outside of which are stables, a windmill, and the factory where the monks concoct the celebrated liqueurs, the tonic elixir, and the ointment known as *Boule d'acier*.

Right opposite the chief entrance to the main pile of buildings is a structure which, though called an infirmary, is really used for the accommodation of female guests, who are most courteously entertained by the superiors of the order; the monkish rank and file not being allowed the

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privilege of doing the amiable to female guests. To those they receive under their roof, they dispense hospitality with a liberal hand; and against no wayfarer, whether rich or poor, is their door closed; while all who visit them are cordially invited to prolong their stay till the following morning at least. Nor is any charge made for the entertainment, though, should a guest be generously disposed, there is not much difficulty in finding a box wherein he may deposit what seemeth good to him, as a contribution to the fund for the relief of the sick or needy under the care of the brotherhood.

If personal experience can be taken as a guide in the matter, it may be safely said that the monks seem to put forth their best efforts to show good-will to Englishmen, even though they know them to be what they deem heretics. For them their stores give up their best viands and their finest liqueurs. It is not a little amusing, too, to find such of the worthy fellows as have a smattering of English eager to show their cleverness in speaking it. Should their visitor give signs that he is of a social disposition, he will have no cause to complain of want of opportunity to gratify it. The storehouse or the refectory will be set aside for extra festivities, when, with a ceaseless flow of song and story, the cheering cup will pass.

We must not, however, do any injustice to the brotherhood. We do not wish it thought that they have, like other such fraternities, sunk into excesses of luxury and irregularity. No; if we may believe the testimony of their neighbours, they, as a rule, cannot be charged with corruption and immorality. Nor would we have it supposed that what of their time is not taken up with devotional exercises is spent in the pursuit of pleasure. This is very far from being the case; for the manufacture of the renowned liqueurs de la Grande Chartreuse, not to speak of the Boule d'acier and the tonic elixir, gives them much hard work to do. In fact, so rapidly has the fame of their concoctions spread, they have now no time to carry on certain industries in which they once engaged. Thus, they used to make the peculiarly shaped bottles in which the liqueurs are sent forth to the public. These they now get from Paris. Not long since, they also prepared from the raw material all the clothing needed in the establishment. This they now purchase in Grenoble. The building known as the Courrierie, in which this work was carried on, stands a short distance from the monastery. It is now the abode of the gardes forestiers.

That the monks should have given up those industries which prevented them from devoting all their spare time to the manufacture of their specialties, is not to be wondered at, since the profit they derived from the latter amounted in the year 1878 to the handsome sum of eighty thousand pounds. Nor can it be thought unnatural that they should carefully guard the secret of the preparation of the articles with which they carry on such a lucrative trade. It has, however, been said that the liqueurs are distilled from about fifty Alpine plants, of which the chief are the wild carnation, the young shoots of the pine, the absinthium or wormwood, mint, and balm. But no one outside the monastery knows how to

utilise the various ingredients so as to produce the Elixir, the Liqueur Verte, the Liqueur Jaune, and the Liqueur Blanche, which are held in such esteem.

The large sum of money which the monks make is mainly devoted to charity. Generous donations are given to schools and benevolent institutions in the department of Isère. Many monastic establishments receive a liberal amount of support. Amongst those which obtain especial sustenance are the far-famed hospital of Mont St Bernard and the Armenian monastery on Mount Sinai. Hospitality, too, as we have said, is lavishly dispensed to all who visit La Grande Chartreuse; nor is any needy wayfarer allowed to leave its roof with an empty purse.

#### MISS GARSTON'S CASE.

##### IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

It was ten days since the elegant brass plate was affixed upon the front-door of my little villa, informing the world that Mr Leighford, Surgeon, was added to the unexceptional residents of the neighbourhood. Yet so far, I had waited in vain for a patient. Some youngsters would have been despondent, some indignant, at an ignoring world; I waited quietly for business. Not that I am a philosopher, or too phlegmatic to feel small anxieties. I was really eager for employment, and with good reason—being ill provided with cash, and having had to do a father's duty towards my younger brothers, and to maintain my mother and sister. With much difficulty, and with sublime heroism on my mother's part, I had passed through my university and medical studies; and now the time had come for me to repay all the sacrifices that had been made on my behalf. So I waited for a crop of patients; but calmly, as I have said.

The reason of the calmness was my absorption in a series of complicated experiments. Let me say that I gloried in my profession. It had only one disagreeable side—that was the earning of fees. I am not, and can never be deeply interested in money matters. So, although the wolf was growling at the door of our pretty villa, and the need of a patron was but too obvious, I went on with my experiments, unwitting of everything else.

The evening of the tenth day was far advanced. I was translating a German story *vivā voce* to the family group; my mother was sewing, my sister also; my brother Sam was writing down my translation, as a sort of 'crib' for getting through the story easily, when he came to deal with it in his lessons. The wintry night was in uproar; the wind howling, the rain tattooing in abrupt dashes against the windows. I doubt if a cosier and happier interior could have been found in all England, than our little dining-room, in spite of financial troubles.

Just as I was in the midst of a most exciting episode of the story, when my mother and sister had dropped their work upon their laps, and Sam had forgot to write, when I was adjusting my voice to an appropriate intonation—for I pride myself upon my elocution—we were all startled by something which brought us from the realms

of fiction to those of reality, by a loud and prolonged ringing of the door-bell.

'Who can it be?' cried my mother.

'Perhaps Uncle Robert,' suggested my sister.

'Perhaps my new clothes,' said Sam.

'Perhaps a patient,' said I, with an incredulous smile.

My mother shook her head despondently.

The servant settled the matter by announcing that a gentleman wanted to see Dr Leighford.

Then there was a pretty flutter, I can assure you. My mother became quite pale, and raised her eyes involuntarily towards heaven; my sister clasped my hand; Sam was all eagerness. Everybody appeared to feel that a crisis had come in our little home. As for myself, I may as well admit that I was a little flustered. However, I followed the servant into the room where the gentleman was waiting.

Standing with his back to the fire, a tall elderly man confronted me. His face was pale, haggard, careworn. But his eye was firm and questioning, though restless. Before I had time to speak, he had looked at me three times, and had seemed to have reflected between the glances.

'You are Dr Leighford, I suppose?' he said.

I bowed.

'You are young; a new beginner, eh?'

'Yes, sir. I have but recently begun to practise on my own behalf. But I have had considerable hospital experience,' I hastened to add; for I feared that my juvenile looks might be against me.

'No doubt, no doubt,' said my visitor indifferently, though looking at me more keenly than before.

A pause, during which the gentleman reflected, while I diagnosed his nervous condition, almost as a matter of habit.

'I want your assistance, doctor,' said he, after pondering, 'in a rather peculiar case; and I should like to have a little conversation with you before we go.'

'Then, pray, be seated,' I rejoined, placing a chair beside him.

He took it, and I sat beside him.

'By the way,' said he, rising from the chair, 'do you mind my lowering the gas a little? My eyes cannot endure much light.—Permit me;' and therewith he turned down the light to a mere glimmer. 'Now, doctor, I want you to give me your most serious attention. I have a ward, a young lady, the daughter of my late partner. She is ill, very ill, and I am terribly concerned about her.'

My visitor did not face me, but sat in half profile; and instead of reoccupying the chair, he had now placed himself upon the sofa four or five feet away. The distance and the gloom made it impossible for me to see the expression of his features. From time to time he wiped his face with a handkerchief, thereby adding to the difficulty of seeing his face. I did not think much about these things until long afterwards; and then what I had attributed to eccentricity and mental distress, assumed another significance.

'What is the matter with the young lady?' I asked.

'Ay, that is the question!' replied my visitor with a sharp intonation, and turning himself towards me.

'Have you had other advice before coming to me?' I asked.

'Oh, truly. Dr Bowman Bulpit, whom you must know. Then Dr Howard of London, Monsieur Lepère of Montpellier, and many others, have seen her. But without much advantage, I regret to say.' This was uttered with a half-whining tone, which somehow jarred upon me annoyingly.

'But what are her symptoms?' I inquired.

'Very peculiar, I am told. Faintness, lassitude, lethargy, want of tone, I think you medical men term it.'

'Have you any idea of the cause of her ill-health?' I asked.

'Why, yes,' replied the gentleman, in an altered, almost faltering voice, and with a hurried glance round the room. 'The poor young thing has had a great shock; her father'—

'O yes; I understand,' said I, interposing to fill up the sentence, which the gentleman seemed unable to complete; 'you incidentally mentioned that he was dead, I think?'

'Yes, yes; he is dead,' my visitor ejaculated, half spasmodically, and turning away.

'Then the young lady is suffering from grief; a very difficult malady to treat, and often beyond the reach of medical art. However, until I have seen her, I cannot give any opinion,' I continued.

'Does grief often kill?' asked the gentleman almost eagerly. Then noting something of astonishment in my attitude, for the question startled me: 'You may understand how anxious I am, and will permit me to put point-blank queries?'

'Oh, there should be no hesitation in cases likely to have a fatal termination. Doubtless, you will have to prepare for testamentary disposal of the lady's property, if her recovery be hopeless.'

'No, no; the poor thing has little or nothing. Her father, my late partner, died almost insolvent. Indeed, his sad end was caused by financial embarrassment. Young as you are, doctor, you know that the world of trade is fraught with pitfalls, and that the cleverest and the shrewdest cannot always escape disaster. No; I am not anxious for the disposal of Miss Garston's property, for she has really none worth speaking of. Between ourselves, she is dependent upon my bounty; though, of course, I do not let her know it. Poor thing; she has trouble enough without that. From no other considerations than those of affection, am I here to consult you. After you have seen her, I want you to give me your frank opinion as to the nature of her malady and the probabilities of her recovery; and also to let me know without reserve what remedies you are administering. I am glad that you are young, doctor. You will doubtless be more considerate of my wishes, than an older and more opinionated man.' As he went on, my visitor grew more and more animated, and he insensibly approached close to me, gliding along the sofa.

I was young, impressionable, eager for employment, and there was something mysterious, or at any rate something unusual in this case. I felt equal to any promise; and so I said: 'You may rely upon my doing all that is possible for the young lady.'

'You know, doctor,' he said again, looking at

me steadfastly, 'young girls are sometimes hysterical, and have strange fancies, and do many odd things?'

I nodded in a matter-of-course sort of way.

'Well, doctor, if you should find that Miss Garston has any symptoms of that kind, complicated with, or arising from the shock she has received, I beg you to be candid with me.'

'Certainly.'

'And if anything—anything *else*, should strike you, you will let me know?'

'Certainly. I shall have no shadow of reserve with you, sir.'

'Thank you, thank you very much, doctor, for that assurance,' cried the gentleman, wringing my hand almost painfully. 'I should also mention,' he continued, 'that as your time and skill will be greatly trenched upon in my service, I am prepared to make the amplest pecuniary return for your aid. May I ask if you can accompany me now?'

As a matter of course, I acquiesced, not unpleasant to think that there was now the prospect of a substantial opening in the work of my profession. But, withal, I was struck with the half-tempting manner in which my patron indicated the subject of my honorarium. I seemed to be offered a bribe, yet it was so masked by polite deference, that I could not be sure of his meaning. Besides, why should I be bribed for simply doing my best for a poor suffering girl?

These thoughts flitted through my puzzled brain as I was putting on my overcoat. The gentleman had a cab waiting at the door, and into it we stepped. After a drive of about ten minutes, we stopped; and I was ushered into a splendidly furnished mansion. Upon entering the house, my companion directed me to step into a large and handsome room, where he left me. Some time passed before he returned; and I had ample leisure to examine the details of the apartment, which seemed half library, half smoking-room; for books and pipes somewhat heterogeneously adorned the walls. Lying on the table was a quaint folio bound in vellum. It looked so odd, that I opened it, curious to know what might be its contents. But it was almost a sealed book to me—it was in Italian. Being, however, a fair Latin scholar, I could make out that it dealt with medicine. I thought it strange that my patron should read such literature. But a man so evidently singular might do many strange things; so I half dismissed the matter from my mind, and turned to look over the names of some of the books upon the shelves. They were chiefly novels, travels, and ordinary books, such as one finds in most houses where accumulation has been going on. With the exception of an encyclopaedia and an atlas, there did not seem to be a learned volume in the collection. This made the vellum folio the more remarkable; and I could not help returning to it, after I had finished my tour of the room.

Perhaps a quarter of an hour had passed, and I was just going to look at the old folio again, when the door opened and my host reappeared. He seemed much agitated, and wiped the perspiration from his brow.

'Pray, excuse my long delay,' he said; 'I have had much difficulty in persuading my ward to see you. She is in a very obstinate mood, I fear. But you will make allowance for her, I have no doubt.'

He looked at me measuringly, notwithstanding his disquietude. I looked at him, and had a better opportunity of noting his personal appearance than previously. I judged him to be between fifty and sixty. He was tall, thin, close-shaven, evidently in weak health, and of a worrying nature, or under some corroding distress. Twitches distorted his face frequently, his hands moved unconsciously, and his feet were ever moving, though he stood upon the same spot. I purposely kept him talking for a few minutes, that I might examine him at length; for I felt that somehow, by knowing him, I should gain a better insight of my patient's malady. This may seem an odd notion to many; nay, I am astonished myself now, as I recall the scene. But how often do we pursue a course intuitively, that reason would reject?

'You will please return to the library, doctor, after you have seen Miss Garston,' said my companion, as we ascended the stairs leading to the sick-room.

'Certainly.'

'I shall only introduce you; and leave you to examine Miss Garston's condition by yourself. I think my presence disturbs her to-night.'

My patron's voice trembled, and he seemed almost ready to collapse, as we went along the corridor. I felt sorry for him. He evidently was deeply concerned for the young lady.

In another instant I was in a large bedroom, heated like a tropical conservatory, and dim as a crypt. A faint, stifling odour pervaded the room, which, with all my hospital experience, felt almost intolerable.

My host led the way to a large catafalque-like bed; and as I drew near, I saw, enshrouded in multiplied wrappings, the figure of a woman.

A pair of keen, glittering eyes were fixed upon me, which I saw plainly enough, in spite of the gloom. More than that, I felt them, as it were, probing me to the very depths of my consciousness. Never in all my clinical practice had I encountered a stare so piercing. In my hospital practice, the sick, the dying, the mad, the sane, the coward, and the brave, all sorts of sufferers had looked at me in the awful moments when the doctor is the embodiment of fate; but none had regarded me like this almost unearthly woman.

I felt almost mesmerised; but by a supreme effort of self-command, I put aside my feelings, and asked the sufferer how she was.

'This is Dr Leighford, Harriet,' said my host quaveringly.

The glittering eyes swept from me to the speaker. He turned aside as if to go. 'You will prefer to tell Dr Leighford how you are by yourself, my dear. I am going down-stairs.'

Again the glittering eyes met mine. I sat down on a chair by the bedside, saying as cheerfully as I could: 'Have you been ill long?'

A faint voice responded: 'Six months.'

'Can you endure a little more light?' I asked. 'It is impossible for me to judge how you are in this semi-darkness.'

A nod was the only reply.

A lamp was upon the table at some distance from the bed. It was of small size; but I managed to get a fair flame after trimming the wick. I brought it to the bedside, and looked at my patient. Her devouring eyes were again fixed on me. But I bore the scrutiny without flinching or without annoyance. I smiled kindly, and spoke soothingly, and went through those little arts of measuring a patient which we learn quite unconsciously.

By degrees, the suspicious interrogatory eyes lost their unearthly expression, and after I had held the lady's hand in mine for a minute, she appeared to grow calmer. Her pulse, which had bounded madly, became steadier. I felt I was gaining her confidence; so I went on looking at my watch, and as I counted the throbings of the wasted arm, I could feel that the sufferer was looking at me more assuredly, though my face was averted.

'You have been very ill indeed,' I said, placing her arm softly down. 'But youth, hope, and good nursing can work wonders.'

'Shall I get better?' she murmured in a hoarse, weak, but most anxious voice.

'To be sure—to be sure, if you will do as I bid you.'

She half rose in her excitement, but fell back again with a groan.

'You promise me life?' she demanded in a whisper.

'Yes, Heaven helping us,' I returned soothingly.

'The others all said I should die,' she continued, turning her eyes again upon me, glaring with distrust.

'I care not what others say; I shall do all that I can to restore you to health,' I said. I felt that I ought not to endure her suspicion any longer, for both our sakes. A doctor who does not inspire the confidence of his patient, is worse than useless; he is a new element of danger.

'Let me look at you,' whispered the lady impatiently.

I took the lamp, placed it close to my face, and stood half defiantly, while she examined me. At length she sighed, and putting forth her hand, said quite audibly: 'I will trust you.'

#### THE INDIAN CENSUS.

ONE of the healthiest signs of the times, and of the nearer approach of an age when all mankind will be united in a grand brotherhood, is the attention which is now bestowed on the physical and ethical well-being of subjugated races, and the gradual acknowledgment of their claim to a share in the rights and privileges of even the most favoured portions of the human family. Formerly, the lot of a conquered people, if they possessed a different coloured skin from the European races, was one of unmixed cruelty and misery, even under English rule; but our reformers and philanthropists—men like Wilberforce in England, and William Lloyd Garrison in America—aroused the attention of the world, and inaugurated a new régime, in which the emancipation of hundreds of thousands of slaves was but a stepping-stone to the universal diffusion of the doctrine of kindness and the spread of education.

A very different state of things than that which

prevailed during the last century is beginning to be the result of this grand movement. A little more than a century since, England by right of conquest became possessed of that magnificent country which has since been styled the brightest jewel in Queen Victoria's crown—India. But for many years little or nothing was done for the benefit or improvement of the numerous races which were thus brought under British rule. It was considered that as we had won it by the sword, we must keep it by the sword. This doctrine, however, we are thankful to say, has, since the great Indian Mutiny, been gradually succumbing to a higher and better one, namely, that of showing the conquered peoples that their interests are our interests, and that, while we can brook no interference from without or within, we intend to base our government of them on the principles of equal justice and freedom to all.

In order to obtain valuable information relating to the millions who inhabit British India, the British government, in 1881, determined upon having a census taken in that country. This is the second census, there having been one in 1872, but not of so elaborate a character as the present one. We have already given in No. 921 of this *Journal* an epitome of the results of the census in the United Kingdom, and noted the greatness of the task which had thus devolved upon the authorities concerned; but compared with the census in India, the full results of which have only just been made known, the former is quite a trifling matter. The counting of the people, or rather the peoples, of India has resulted in the stupendous total of two hundred and fifty-four million eight hundred and ninety-nine thousand five hundred and sixteen! Some idea of the vastness of this 'jewel' in the Queen's crown may be grasped from these overwhelming figures, but not so of the responsibilities which weigh upon the shoulders of those who have to administer the government of such a nation as that. This can only be gained by a knowledge of the manners and customs of the various races and castes which go to make up the grand total.

The divisions arising from race and religion are as follows:

Hindus.....	187,937,450
Mohammedans.....	50,121,585
Nature-worshippers.....	6,426,511
Buddhists.....	3,418,884
Christians.....	1,862,634
Jains.....	1,221,896
Sikhs.....	853,426
Other creeds and unspecified.....	3,057,130
Total.....	254,899,516

All these races, especially the Hindus, are subdivided into sects and castes, too numerous to mention in a brief paper like this; and their religions are mixtures of various ideas, mythical records, and histories of saints and heroes, about whom the wildest stories are believed, and to whom also are credited the most stupendous miracles. Brahma, the god around whose shrine cluster so many wonderful legends, and whose origin is supposed to be of so mystical and wondrous a nature, has, contrary to what people in this country have hitherto imagined, comparatively few worshippers compared with the gods or idols of other Indian religions. Vishnu and

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Siva, under various cognomens, seem to be the deities who have the greatest number of worshippers, the worship itself being a kind of mythology representing the reproductive powers of nature, and in which trees and serpents are the most popular symbols.

A barbarous and unnatural custom is that in India, principally among the Hindus, which compels the marriage of mere children, and which it is to be hoped will become less marked as time rolls on, and as the people, by education, obtain a gradual knowledge of the ethics of civilised nations. The result of this custom is shown by the census in the number of widows and their ages belonging to the Hindu race. Under ten years of age there are no fewer than sixty-three thousand ; between ten and fifteen, one hundred and seventy-four thousand five hundred and twenty-four ; between fifteen and twenty, fifteen million three hundred and twelve thousand six hundred and twenty-one ; and between twenty and thirty, one million five hundred and seventy-two thousand one hundred and forty-five. This gives a total of seventeen million one hundred and twenty-two thousand two hundred and ninety widows—a number which is equal to two-thirds of the whole population of England. And what makes the custom still more reprehensible is the fact, that this great host of widows is prohibited from marrying a second time.

The two million of 'Christians,' most of whom are Roman Catholics, does not, of course, include any of European nationality ; and this number, large as it is in itself, is in reality but a small bubble in the vast ocean of dark-skinned humanity summed up in the great total already given. The value of such a 'leaven' in the midst of heathenism is also lessened by the fact that in thousands of cases this Indian 'Christianity' is darkened and choked by a good deal of the old idolatry.

There are fourteen principal sects ; but the number of castes, including the minor ones, are almost countless. The spread of civilisation is doing wonders in the way of bringing together and uniting some of these ; and should progress continue to be made, as doubtless it will, by the extension of railways, canals, and the development of all kinds of commercial enterprise, we may yet see a healthy national life springing up in India, which will make it at once both the glory and the pride of untiring British energy. Great barriers of ignorance and passion require, however, to be broken down ere this effect can be accomplished ; for Mohammedans and Hindus seem to be natural enemies, and require all the administrative wisdom of the government to prevent frequent outbreaks of fanaticism.

The Jains are a curious sect, who oppose all caste, and whose worship is a strange mixture of Buddhism and Hinduism, with the additional attraction of twenty-four special saints ; while the Sikhs are simple theists, and do not appear to be so deeply imbued with the superstitions of the other religions.

Education seems to be the one great antidote for all this mass of ignorance and superstition, and it is a good thing to know that this is making slow yet hopeful progress. Out of two hundred and one millions, from whom information could be obtained, thirteen millions can read and write,

and about five millions are receiving instruction. Only two hundred and three thousand of the vast number can speak English, and these, we presume, are of the higher classes.

There are a great variety of languages spoken in India, and this will in itself always be an insuperable obstacle to unity, national or otherwise. Besides dialects, there are no less than one hundred and twenty-three distinct languages enumerated, though many of these are spoken only by small numbers of the people. Hindustani appears to be the principal language, and this is spoken by eighty-two millions ; Bengali by thirty-nine millions ; and Telegu and Mahratta by about seventeen millions each. All the rest are minor languages, and are spoken by fewer numbers.

The saddest part, perhaps, of all this wonderful population is the six hundred and one thousand one hundred and sixty-four 'priests,' who are continually engaged in teaching what we can find no better name for than the doctrine of darkness ; and it would be well if a great effort could be made to enlist this vast army of enthusiasts on the side of light and progress. If this could be accomplished, a rapid and wholesome change would soon be brought about.

Most of the people of India are engaged in agriculture. But no less than forty-eight million seven hundred and ninety-four thousand one hundred and ninety-five are returned as of 'no stated occupation,' while about two millions and a half are employed in the cultivation of the cotton-plant and the production of that material. The government employs about a million and a half in its service ; and half a million are accounted for as being employed in municipal, local, and village administration.

To govern and keep in order these two hundred and fifty millions of people of various races, religions, and languages, there is what we may term, in modern parliamentary and military phraseology, an 'English garrison' of only eighty-nine thousand and fifteen persons ! This includes the British-born residents and the army.

When we consider that only a century ago these various races of India were continually engaged in war with each other, and that the whole land was filled with a terrible chaos, Englishmen may surely look with pride on so splendid an appanage of our world-wide empire ; knowing as we do what a peerless opportunity of doing good it offers, by enabling us to use the great powers which Providence has bestowed upon us as a nation, in spreading to-day the inestimable blessings of light and freedom, where but yesterday all was dire confusion and dismay.

#### MATCH-MAKING.

SOME people have a positive mania for match-making. Whether from want of better employment, or because they believe, like Mrs Jellyby, that they have a great and glorious mission, they are never happier than when scheming and contriving to dispose matrimonially of one or other of their young acquaintance. They regard all their unmarried friends, especially their unmarried lady friends, with an eye of compassionate solicitude ; and their ingenuity is continually on the rack to discover what they can

do for this, that, or the other, in the way of providing him or her with a partner for life. Like most other busy-bodies, these missionary match-makers, as we might call them, do a world of mischief. They meddle, and plot, and manage where they have no right whatever to interfere, and are seldom deterred by a sense of the responsibility which attaches to any one influencing and encouraging young people in such a serious matter. On the contrary, they think nothing of ignoring, and even attempting to override, the opinion of parents and others upon whom the direct responsibility ought to devolve.

Match-makers of this description are usually less concerned about the future of their young friends than about the diversion and excitement of a certain sort which they themselves derive from the part they play in superintending and promoting the negotiations, and the subsequent importance they will be able to assume as the persons who have been mainly instrumental in bringing about the match. So long as they are enabled to play out their favourite game, they bestow but little thought upon the possible consequences. If the match prove to be an unfortunate one, they exhibit a remarkable facility in disclaiming all responsibility. They recall the many words of counsel and of caution which they had given; and to hear them speak, one would suppose that they had done everything in their power to dissuade the young people from marrying, instead of having done all they could to encourage them. If, however, the marriage is a happy one, they are seldom slow to claim a full share of credit for the part they have played, and find constant opportunities to remind the young couple and their friends how much all this present felicity is due to their foresight and sagacity.

No sensible person does voluntarily undertake the office of match-maker. Mammas with a numerous following of daughters have the office thrust upon them to a certain extent whether they will or not; but theirs is a very different case from that of the person who takes to match-making as a sort of recreation or pastime, or, still worse, as a mission. It may be said that mothers would often be much better employed, and would really be doing more for the best interests of their girls, if they devoted the same amount of time to their education and instruction in household duties as they spend in 'trotting them out' for the inspection and admiration of possible sons-in-law. The rebuke, wherever merited—as it no doubt is in some instances—is perfectly just. But when a mother has done her duty otherwise, a reasonable amount of managing and manoeuvring on her part to provide her daughters with suitable husbands, is perfectly justifiable. She may feel tolerably certain that, with or without her cognisance, some sort of match-making, or, at all events, flirtation is sure to occur; and that being so, it is undoubtedly better that such proceedings should be conducted under her watchful care and direction, than that they should be carried on clandestinely or under less responsible supervision.

To parents with a large family of daughters, the successful bestowal of them all in matrimony is no light matter. It is a matter involving not

only much serious thought, but often also great trouble and expense. 'What,' says Thackeray, 'causes respectable parents to take up their carpets, set their houses topsy-turvy, and spend a fifth of their year's income in ball suppers and iced champagne? Is it a sheer love of their species, and an unadulterated wish to see young people happy and dancing? Pshaw! They wish to marry their daughters.' A wit remarks that when a man's only resources consist of a numerous family of daughters, the best thing he can do is to husband his resources. That is no doubt very sage advice; but girls are a kind of resources which it is sometimes by no means easy to husband. In order to execute that manœuvre, a great many other resources have generally to be called into requisition, and not the least important of these is a substantial bank account. If his daughters be his only resources, both he and they will be placed at a decided disadvantage. Even if he does not spend a fifth of his income in ball suppers and iced champagne, the father who wishes to give his girls a chance at all, must keep them at anyrate stylish, which may even be extended to include a certain amount of fashionable extravagance. It is only the head of such a household who knows what all this involves.

But when *Paterfamilias* has provided the sinews of war, there, as a rule, his share in the match-making ends. Men have not sufficient tact to be intrusted with such delicate tasks. When they take it upon themselves to interfere in these matters, they are sure to make trouble of one kind or another. Match-making is essentially the ladies' province. It is, moreover, a branch of diplomatic service in which few men have any ambition to distinguish themselves. At the best, it is a somewhat invidious task. A mother and her six marriageable daughters have been facetiously described as a 'school of design'; and that is really the aspect in which they are generally regarded. The very appearance of mamma at the head of such a battalion is sometimes enough to scare away the most stout-hearted eligible single gentlemen, whose suspicions are immediately aroused, and who, rightly or wrongly, persist in regarding the party as a veritable school of design. The difficulty is immensely increased if the young ladies do not happen to be particularly brilliant or attractive. It is here that papa's financial resources come into play. But even when these resources are considerable, intending suitors are apt to pause when they think of the process of subdivision that will have to be undergone. To manœuvre her forces so as to bring about a series of successful engagements, thus demands, on the part of the maternal head, no little skill in generalship as well as in diplomacy.

American mothers have acquired some reputation for skill and energy in connubial management on behalf of their daughters. A Parisian newspaper some time ago recorded an exceedingly clever bit of match-making, executed by an American lady of this order in brilliant style. Her eldest daughter had sailed from New York with some friends for a tour of Europe, and after 'doing' the continent, had returned to the French capital for several months of rest and pleasure. Attractive and clever, she had many

suitors, some more, some less desirable. She could not marry them all, so she adroitly reduced the number to two—the best of the lot, of course. Then she wrote home to her mamma, explaining the exact situation of affairs, adding that they were both so handsome, agreeable, well connected, and rich, that she could not decide between them, and closed with the question, 'What shall I do?' Ten days later, she received a cablegram from mamma: 'I sail to-morrow; hold both till I come.' The next transatlantic steamer brought Mrs Blank with her second daughter, just turned eighteen, and fresh from school. On her arrival, the old lady at once took the helm of affairs, and steered so deftly through the dangerous waters, that in a few weeks she had reached port with all colours flying. To drop metaphor, she attended the wedding of her two daughters at the American chapel on the same morning. After due examination, she had decided that neither of the nice fellows should go out of the family.

Here is an illustration of a much less skilful attempt at match-making, with a very different dénouement. A certain member of parliament, who owned extensive estates, was spending a few days at the residence of a noble family. There were several interesting and accomplished young ladies in the family, to whom the honourable member showed every attention. Just as he was about to take leave, the nobleman's wife proceeded to consult him upon a matter which, she declared, was causing her no little distress. 'It is reported,' said the Countess, 'that you are to marry my daughter Lucy, and what shall we do? What shall we say about it?' 'Oh,' replied the considerate M.P., with much adroitness, 'just say she refused me.'

We have said that men do not, as a rule, figure conspicuously as match-makers; nor do they; but the judgment and policy exhibited in this connection by a knowing old gentleman of our acquaintance could hardly be surpassed by the most accomplished tactician of either sex. 'Brown,' said a neighbour to him one day, 'I don't see how it is that your girls all marry off as soon as they get old enough, while none of mine can marry.' 'Oh! that's simple enough,' he replied; 'I marry my girls off on the buckwheat-straw principle.'

'But what principle is that? Never heard of it before.'

'Well, I used to raise a good deal of buckwheat, and it puzzled me to know how to get rid of the straw. Nothing would eat it, and it was a great bother to me. At last I thought of a plan. I stacked my buckwheat straw nicely, and built a high rail-fence around it. My cattle of course concluded that it must be something good, and at once tore down the fence and began to eat the straw. I drove them away, and put up the fence a few times; but the more I hunted them off, the more anxious they became to eat the straw; and eat it they did, every bit of it. As I said, I marry my girls on the same principle. When a young man that I don't like begins to call on my girls, I encourage him in every way I can. I tell him to come often, and stay as late as he pleases; and I take pains to hint to the girls that I think they'd better set their caps for him. It works first-rate. He don't make many calls, for the girls

treat him as coolly as they can. But when a young fellow that I like comes around, a man that I think would suit me for a son-in-law, I don't let him make many calls before I give him to understand that he isn't wanted about my house. I tell the girls, too, that they shall not have anything to do with him, and give them orders never to speak to him again. The plan always works exactly as I wish. The young folks begin to pity and sympathise with each other; and the next thing I know is that they are engaged to be married. When I see that they are determined to marry, I of course give in, and pretend to make the best of it. That's the way I manage it.'

An old lady who had several unmarried daughters, fed them largely on a fish-diet, because, as she ingeniously observed, fish is rich in phosphorus, and phosphorus is the essential thing in making matches. If the phosphoric diet caused the young ladies to shine in society, they in all probability did not adopt it in vain; for, just as fish are easily attracted in the night by any bright light thrown upon the water, so young men are invariably found to flock after any girl who 'shines,' even though her accomplishments may be of a very shallow, superficial, or phosphorescent character. No experienced match-making mamma requires to be taught the value of display as an almost certain means of attraction. That is the secret of the ball suppers and iced champagne, the heavy dressmakers' bills, and the thousand and one other items of extravagance that have to be met in order that the young ladies may make a 'respectable' appearance, and may finish with a successful match. And that is why so many of these match-making ventures have so often resulted in the most deplorable sequels. Display is met with display, the one frequently as hollow and false as the other. The distinguished foreigner, or the fascinating young nobleman, is discovered, when it is too late, to be nothing more nor less than an unprincipled adventurer; and the merchant who was supposed to be little if anything short of a millionaire, is found, also when it is too late, to be on the verge of bankruptcy. Very often, in such matches, both parties are sold, and then the universal verdict is, 'Serves them right.'

#### THE FLEUSS APPARATUS FOR MINES.

IN No. 848 of this *Journal* we described the apparatus invented by Mr Fleuss for enabling those who wear it to remain for a long time under water without communication with the atmosphere. We are glad to notice that an adaptation of this valuable invention, for use in mines, has received government sanction and recommendation. In a circular from the Home Office, the Secretary of State recently called the attention of owners of coal-mines to the Fleuss breathing-machine, which will enable men instructed in its use to remain in localities where the atmosphere is in a highly vitiated or irrespirable condition. It is a well-known fact that after an explosion, many men are left to their fate, from the foul state of the workings, and from the inability of their comrades to help them, however much they might desire to do so. Fortified with such a machine, however, it is quite possible for miners

to face the deadly gases prevalent in mines after an explosion, and go to the assistance of those whose escape may have been cut off by an explosion or mining accident. The Home Office circular suggests that the system upon which life-boat stations have been organised might be applied to the creation in mining districts of stations where the Fleuss apparatus could be stored in sufficient numbers, and maintained in readiness for immediate use. A rescuing-party could thus be quickly on the spot, in the case of an accident.

The general principle of the Fleuss breathing-machine for mines is the same as that already described in our pages. Independent of air pumped as in the ordinary diver's costume, it consists of a mask or helmet which covers the head, and is connected by tubes with a cylinder filled with compressed oxygen, and with a box containing pieces of caustic soda distributed among a packing of tow. This apparatus provides for the decomposition of the poisonous carbonic acid from the breath exhaled into it, and for the renewal of the consumed oxygen. The air which has been breathed passes into the carbonic acid filter, where it is absorbed by the caustic soda. The nitrogen of the original air-supply remains unchanged; but a tap enables the wearer to admit more oxygen from the cylinder as it may be required. Respiration may be continued as long as the compressed oxygen and caustic soda will allow, which may be for three or four hours at a time; and thus armed, the wearer may move about freely amongst the deadly gases of a mine, which otherwise would prove instantly fatal.

This machine was of much practical use after the Seaham accident in 1880, when the workings were penetrated for four hundred yards beyond the last point at which air was circulating. By its means, when the downcast shaft of Killingworth Colliery fell in, and imprisoned several miners in the workings, five men, who had been rendered insensible by the noxious gases, were carried away, and four were assisted to walk out.

Mr Septimus H. Hedley, who has had practical acquaintance with its working, says that with very little practice, a man of common intelligence would be able to use the apparatus; and he suggests that certain collieries in each district should be supplied with six sets of apparatus and lamps, together with the appliances for making and compressing the gas required. Foster and Fleuss's Patent Safety Mining Lamp, which is described in the same circular, is a modification of the limelight; and is stated by the inventors to burn for four hours equally well under water, in carbonic acid, or in fire-damp. Methylated spirits of wine are used instead of hydrogen gas. The lamp consists of a strong copper sphere, seven inches in diameter, capable of being highly charged with oxygen. To the top of the sphere, a small spirit-lamp with two wicks is attached, between which, a small jet of oxygen carries the flame against a cylinder of lime placed to receive it. Discs of plain glass are inserted opposite each other in the inner and outer casings. Outside, there is a double metal casing, the space between which is filled with water, through which the gases escape by an outlet valve fixed on the outer case.

The practical importance of having a service of such breathing machines and lamps in every colliery district is at once apparent. The dangers attending work in a coal-mine are so great, that any attempt to diminish the mining mortality may be welcomed as a great public benefit.

#### ASBESTOS.

Colonial papers record that deposits of very considerable extent of this remarkable crystalline rock have been discovered in New South Wales at Gundagai. Its existence in Tasmania has long been known; but gold has been too profitable for attention to be given to the mining task of securing asbestos. A great advantage in mining for this rock is that it is taken out of its bed in a similar way, and almost as rapidly as we take out a particular layer of chalk or coal in this country. It is described as having the appearance of solidified 'silkworm produce,' and exists in large bunches petrified. This mineral is found to be a perfect non-conductor of electricity, and for this reason gloves have been prepared from the substance for the use of electricians, which will prove very useful in diminishing the risks of that most dangerous occupation. When a greater supply of this mineral is obtained, it may possibly be discovered that it can be powdered or dissolved by some chemical means, so that its non-combustible properties may be made available in rendering textile fabrics or wooden erections proof against fire.

#### THE SONG'S ERRAND.

O Song! go greet her whom I may not greet,  
My tender thoughts pour out:  
Tell her that though so far apart we be,  
I do remember evermore.

Ask her, O Song, if she hath quite forgot  
That far-off, golden noon;  
'Twas the year's sweetest season, and my heart  
Throbbed to the passionate heart of June.

Down in the garden where the birds and bees  
Revelled, I wandered long;  
Till on mine eyes there fell the fairest sight,  
And on mine ears the sweetest song.

I gazed into the depths of wondrous eyes,  
I clasped a soft white hand;  
And Love awaked, and a diviner air  
Breathed low upon the sea and land.

And then I knew that Love transfigures yet,  
As in the days of old:  
The world was fair, and we were young—O Song,  
Such hours are lived, but never told!

She dwelleth calm amid her cloistered shades—  
I tread life's busy mart;  
She dreameth not, in murmuring prayers to Heaven,  
Of restless head and weary heart.

O Song, 'tis summer, and the roses blow  
Where winter's snow hath lain;  
But tell her, tell her that life's June of love  
Will never come to me again.

HUGH LINDSAY.

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